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Editorial

WE note two fresh signs that some of those who are directly responsible for the state of British universities are engaged in a wholesome self-examination. As compared with the volume of literature and the public discussion that have centred upon education at the school level, the absence of thought about the purpose and condition of our universities has been remarkable. The recent books by Bruce Truscot and Arnold Nash were designed to put the subject on the map, and it is encouraging to observe that there is a Christian response which is neither a burying of heads in the sand nor a defence of things as they are, but an endeavour to discover principles that have not been previously defined and to indicate the outlook and action that are consonant with them.

As long as they could, conservative churchmen fought for the old type of university in which the Church had a monopoly. But since that battle was lost, the free or liberal university has been acquiesced in or taken for granted. Who has bothered to inquire into its fundamental *raison d'être* or to show that there is a Christian interest in defending it or that it is not merely a realization of the "indifferentism" of which Archdeacon Denison used to prophesy? The fascist and communist rejection of the liberal ideal we have deplored. We have known that we did not want that sort of university. But what sort of university do we want, and why?

A series of twelve *University Pamphlets* that have been published by the S.C.M. Press (1s. each; edited by R. H. Preston) is the outcome of some concerted work by a group of Christians, and whatever may be thought of their conclusions it will be found that they uncover a large range of problems which ought to be engaging the attention of everyone in the university world. In point of fact, they agree that there is a Christian interest in defending and strengthening the free or liberal university, and they seek to explain why this is so. In consequence they hold that Christians can and ought to make common cause with humanists of other schools, while by no means maintaining silence about metaphysical, theological and political divergences.

For this reason we welcome the other sign that we have noted—the beginning of a university quarterly, entitled *Humanitas*.[1] This is due to the initiative of some members of Manchester University, but they hope to secure the co-operation of writers and readers in other universities. "Christians and Humanists," the editors write, "have a common treasure to defend: the values of the Hellenistic and Judæo-Christian civilizations in which our own has its roots. . . . The Universities should be bastions in the defence of this tradition—and something more. For in them tradition must be revitalized and developed, before being handed on."

[1] Published at the University Union, Manchester 5; 10s. per annum (6s. to undergraduates).

The Present Position of the Unity Movement

One of my earliest recollections of the unity movement is hearing a sermon by an enthusiastic participant in the Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order in 1927. In conclusion he said that what was now needed was for the rank-and-file of the Church to catch up with their leaders in concern for Christian Unity. Twenty years' repetition of that exhortation has made it into a platitude; it still contains truth. But it is one purpose of this paper to suggest that that platitude no longer contains the most important truth about the present position of the unity movement.

But first let justice be done for the element of truth it still contains. Primarily through popular ignorance of it, there is widespread failure to appreciate the remarkable achievement of the "so-called Ecumenical Movement." (The doubts implied in those quotation marks will be dealt with later.) The last forty years have seen the ecumenical movement evolve through the intertwining of three strands, plus recently a bit of skilful splicing to be known as the World Council of Churches.

Historically first comes the missionary movement. It was at the Edinburgh Conference, in 1910, that a wide range of Christians from many countries and Churches first met together in the tension in which is the essence of the ecumenical movement: the tension between full loyalty to one's own convictions and traditions and the desire for maximum co-operation. There had been, and still are, many associations of like-minded Christians transcending denominational barriers. The Edinburgh Conference was held on the explicitly *inter*-denominational (as distinct from un-denominational) basis previously hammered out in the councils of the Student Christian Movement. (See T. Tatlow: *History of the S.C.M.*, pp. 389-412.)

To this day, the International Missionary Council, residuary legatee of Edinburgh 1910, maintains the maximum co-operation possible to a divided Christendom in the evangelization of the world and the building up of the younger Churches. The conferences at Jerusalem in 1928 and Madras in 1938 are milestones in the progress of the younger Churches to autonomy and full responsibility. The I.M.C., largely under the guidance of Dr J. H. Oldham, gave the first exhibitions of the undoubted advantages of inter-church co-operation when it comes to dealing with Government offices and colonial administration—a pragmatic argument for Christian unity which is only saved from being poisonous if it is accompanied, as in the I.M.C. it is, by a lively respect for dogmatic convictions and for a truly evangelical and catholic regard for the Church as the gift of God and not the creation of men.

The second strand is *Faith and Order*. Charles Gore, among others, recognized that Edinburgh raised ultimate questions of church principle (*v. Life of Charles Gore*, by L. Prestige, p. 312) and it was Bishop Brent of W. New York who led the demand for common consultation, not actually to achieve reunion but to "act as the handmaid of the

Churches in the preparatory work of clearing away misunderstandings, discussing obstacles to reunion and issuing reports to the Churches for their approval" (Edinburgh Report, p. 3). Lausanne 1927 and Edinburgh 1937 focused a vast amount of honest and persistent theological exchange over a wide field, including many representatives of the Orthodox East. They scrupulously registered in their reports such disagreements as they found. But the agreements they registered are far more significant. A recent symposium issued by the British Council of Churches contains a chapter by Dr Newton Flew (chairman of the Faith and Order Commission on the Nature of the Church) which ought to be read (but, one fears, will not be) by all the myopic dyspeptics who continue to talk as though that which separates Christians is of more importance than that which unites them. (See *The Christian Challenge in the Post-War World*, pp. 37-63.) This is not to deny that there are qualifications which might be made to that chapter, and which will be suggested later in this article.

The third strand is the tradition of *Life and Work*, its prophet at first Archbishop Söderblom of Upsala. By virtue of its field of interest, the social, economic and political responsibilities of the Church, this element in the ecumenical movement has been more susceptible to the *zeitgeist* than the two former strands. Stockholm 1925 (and even more its British predecessor, COPEC 1924) is open to the charge of being unduly influenced by the secular liberal optimism of the nineteen-twenties. (*Cf.* Congar, *Chrétiens désunis:* Engl. ed., pp. 121-7.) Oxford 1937 by comparison showed a stiffening of the backbone both of orthodoxy in its doctrine and of realism in its economic and political analysis, a change that is perhaps partly *zeitgeist* and partly *Heilige Geist*. But the essays in preparation for Oxford and the insights into Christian responsibility for every aspect of "Community and State" shown in its report (*The Churches Survey their Task*) have certainly not yet been superseded by any corporate production of Christians and rarely equalled in the work of individuals.

Following Oxford and Edinburgh in 1937, it was proposed that those two strands should be spliced in the World Council of Churches. The I.M.C. was for the moment left outside the plan, since its whole structure was different (primarily an association not between Churches but between missionary societies and boards on the one hand and "National Christian Councils," joint bodies of the younger Churches, on the other). But it is obvious that as nascent Churches of Africa and the East achieve independence and self-consciousness they will also severally become members of the World Council. Invitations to join "a fellowship of Churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour" were sent to the 120 Christian bodies represented at Oxford and Edinburgh. At the moment of writing 95 have accepted. The purpose of the Council is "to carry on the work of *Faith and Order* and *Life and Work*, to facilitate common action, to promote common study, to foster the growth of ecumenical consciousness in the members of all Churches and to call world conferences on specific subjects as occasion may require." (Quotation from the provisional Constitution.) The inauguration of the Council by its first world Assembly (a body

of some 450 official representatives of the Churches, according to the present constitution) was delayed by the outbreak of war. At the first full meeting of the Provisional Committee, held in Geneva in February 1946, it was decided to hold the first Assembly in the late summer of 1948. An extensive program of preparatory commissions has been arranged and there is every hope that, as the Assembly date draws nearer, the constituent Churches will have opportunities to participate fully in the whole volume of thought and prayer which can alone give substance to its meeting. During the war years, in spite of a tenuous organized existence, the World Council was responsible for much remarkable activity, culminating, since hostilities ceased, in the vast work of the Reconstruction Department, of which Christian Reconstruction in Europe is the British arm.

So much, in bare outline, for the positive achievements of the ecumenical movement up to date. There is a vast literature available to all who are interested in, but ignorant of, the details of the picture.[1] But perhaps this sketch is sufficient to show that church leaders have indeed, in the past forty years, engaged in a reciprocity and joint exploration of which the rank-and-file are but dimly conscious and by which they are slightly affected. Many questions remain to be asked and many problems have still to be faced.

First it might be well to inquire a little more clearly why this gap between leaders and those who decline to be led remains so stubbornly wide. The plain fact is that the ecumenical movement is far from being generally accepted by the Churches nominally committed to it. Part of the explanation is its relative novelty in the history of the churches. The situation, it may be suggested, is not unlike the attitude of the rank-and-file towards missionary work 150 years ago. Then a world evangelism which was once for the Church an axiom seemed the odd fancy of a few enthusiasts. To-day, an ecumenical outlook which was once equally axiomatic is thought by many to be a fad. The Churches are well established and of known authority: the ecumenical movement is relatively new and of disputed authority. To the grounds of that doubt we shall return at the end.

Further, there is to-day a widespread, and in itself thoroughly healthy, conviction that the *real* life of the Church is in the local community, in "life on the spot," whilst ecumenical jobs are vague, primarily administrative, and carry all the shameful innuendo of "bureaucrat." This is a salutary reminder that all ecumenical organization is a waste of time if it is not closely related to the life of the local church, and if it is not largely staffed by men who come fresh from the bureaucracy-hating rank-and-file and, before too long, return thither. But since bureaucracy grows apace also within the Churches it does not in itself explain why the ecumenical movement seems so far to have had little effect on local church life. Apart from a tiny handful of "permanent civil servants," the men who made the conferences

[1] The writer will gladly give such information if asked: Rev. O. S. Tomkins, British Office of the World Council of Churches, 21 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

came from responsibile posts in their own Churches and returned to them again.

Part of the explanation of the gap is precisely that those who met in conference were *too* successful. They illustrated the now familiar aphorism that "all real life is meeting." They encountered one another in that fruitful and creative way which is qualitatively different. They *knew* each other and did not just know about each other. They talked, learned, prayed together; in a deeply Christian sense they loved each other. They entered into a world which no outsider can understand because the essence of it was the *Koinonia* which is the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who seek it. Insensibly, the men of Lausanne and Edinburgh, of Stockholm and Oxford and of the dozens of smaller associations that lay between, became the elect of a new covenant and found it hard to remember how little of those they "represented" they were able to carry with them into the sanctuary. Probably the most effective way of closing the gap is vastly to enlarge the field of those who can know that "encounter between persons," across the barriers of Church and nation, which is close to the heart of the ecumenical experience.

But it is the experience of the ecumenical movement during the years of war which has illuminated a problem more real than the gulf between leaders and rank-and-file. Over half the Churches which have asked to join the World Council did so *after* 1939. From country after country, where the Church had "stood under the Cross" in persecution and martyrdom, comes testimony to a new discovery in their sufferings of the meaning of the ecumenical movement. The real problem of the ecumenical movement is no longer one of range but of intensity. The call to unity is seen to be a call to holiness. Where the accent was once *UNA sancta* it is now rather *Una SANCTA.*

Let us look again, for illustration, at the four strands, whose previous strength we have already estimated.

The Missionary Movement.—Of the missionary movement I will write briefly, for I have only a visitor's knowledge. One of the achievements of the meetings in successive weeks last February of I.M.C. and World Council committees was the expression of a far stronger desire for close co-operation than the attitude expressed at Madras would have suggested. Part of the reason was surely a deepened awareness of the way in which the Church in both East and West not only stands beleaguered but faces a single task of evangelism. One of the preparatory commissions for the Assembly (in preparing which the I.M.C. shares fully) will deal with "the proclamation of the order of God," the Apostolic *kerugma* in our time. Part of its problem is to discover how real a difference there is between proclaiming the Gospel in a post-Christian and in a pre-Christian setting. The distinction is not as clear as might at first appear. Whole areas of Europe are now virgin soil to Christian missionaries; in whole areas of the East men step straight from paganism into a post-Christian secularism. In both East and West, fundamental questions of the nature of the Gospel to be proclaimed and of the Church which proclaims and lives by it force the question of Christian reunion on to the level not so much of the extent of unity as of its quality. Japan

experienced a sharp lesson in the danger of pragmatic union. The tragedy of the South India controversy is that it raised the right issues in the wrong context: what might have been the occasion for a deeper consideration of the nature of Christian unity in the *whole* Church became principally an internecine struggle in the Church of England. The moment calls not for the pressing of sectional interests but for laying generously at the disposal of all Christendom our deepest convictions by living up to them.

Faith and Order.—Hitherto the attribute of Faith and Order most near to the divine attributes is perhaps that in its sight a thousand years are but as one day. It is proper that a work primarily theological and scholastic should show something of the unhurried world-forsaking tranquillity of the study. The movement has always had its "hustlers" demanding quick results, but on the whole it has appealed to those who claim, and rightly claim, that truth is wooed by patience.

Here also recent years have pressed new lessons. One of the marks of recent theological thinking in the ecumenical movement as a whole can only be described as a discovery of "biblical theology." The term is vague and its content still far from clear. The problem of criticism is still unsolved. For example, how historical criticism affects exegesis still receives varying answers, especially in regard to Old Testament exegesis. The work of Prof. W. Vischer of Basle has raised the latter question sharply. But the essence of "biblical theology" is surely the recognition that in the Bible is seen, *norma normans*, a whole distinctive *manner* of apprehending God, literally a different *world*, with its own language, laws and standards. Whether the world of the Bible has affinities with the world outside itself, the whole classical tradition and the world of the ancient or the primitive religions, and the extent of those affinities, is of course a main matter of controversy. But the mark of biblical theology is to agree that in any case it is the world of the Bible which has validity. If the world outside the Bible has any validity for Christians, it is because the Bible has endorsed it. (C. H. Dodd's recent articles in THEOLOGY on "Natural Law in the Bible" are an example of this outlook.)

But in the world of the Bible there is a note of urgency which can be admitted by many who are not theological existentialists in the strict sense. It is an urgency which calls into question that element of scholastic unhurriedness which is due to thinking of truth as timeless in a Greek sense and not of truth as eternal in a Hebrew sense. For the Biblical theologian, truth must not only be sought but, *hic et nunc*, obeyed. This is not the activism which believes it is better to do anything than nothing; but neither is it the detachment which believes it is better to do nothing than to risk a mistake. In these years of decision, theological truth has become very much a matter of costly obediences. From Barmen onwards, statements which read to Anglo-Saxons as the hair-splittings of schoolmen have spelt the difference between prison and liberty, often between life and death. From now on, Faith and Order discussions will be conducted in part by men who have learnt anew that theology means not only discussion but decision. They will set the pace for those who always wish to propose adjournment *sine die*. Some

theologians who decided wrongly may well be missing. Theologians have once more become *Sanctæ Theologiæ Doctores.*

Further, it is no accident that the revival of biblical theology has led the ecumenical movement to a new attention to the doctrine of the Church. In the early days of the ecumenical movement, it is probable that Anglicans and Orthodox made ecumenical conferences "church-conscious." But I think Anglicans would be claiming a share in an untenable claim if we thought we were *wholly* responsible. On the contrary, my impression is that, whatever might have been true in the 1920's, to-day the initiative in the theology of the Church has passed to the Protestant theologians. There is no doubt that the massive corporate tradition of Orthodoxy exhibited by the mere presence of the Easterns (quite apart from its brilliant exposition by thinkers like Bulgakov) and the contribution to the discussion by the heirs of the Tractarians confronted Protestantism with an unavoidable challenge. But ultimately, the challenge was found unavoidable not because it was Catholic, but because it was recognized as Biblical. (If as Catholics we happily retort that the two are synonymous, we must be prepared for the consequences!)

The residual effect of the *formgeschichtliche Schule* has been to restore and enhance the idea of the Church and of tradition, and has demanded a re-examination by Protestants of their indifference to history (which is seen to be more than the three "moments" of the New Testament, the Reformation and Now) and by Catholics of their tendency to present the Church primarily in terms of its history. The facile formula that we have achieved agreement in faith and only disagree on order is untrue. The problem is what kind of order is part of the New Testament faith. It is doubtful whether the Edinburgh "agreement" on the doctrine of Grace can now be left undisturbed in the files; the subject will have to be reopened in the context of the operation of God through the form of the Church. Of the extant Commissions of Faith and Order, one is comprehensively concerned with the whole doctrine of the Church, and the remaining two with analysing the activity of the Churches in "ways of worship" and "the theory and practice of the Churches regarding intercommunion." But none of them can rest in the compilation of a disinterested catalogue. All are dealing with the being of a Church which is called, not only to unity, but to holiness.

Life and Work.—In the *Life and Work* tradition, it was the Oxford Conference of 1937 itself which coined the arresting tautology (Report, p. 57): "The first duty of the Church . . . is that it be in very deed the Church." That still expresses the central concern. Since 1937 some tendencies of the social order are seen yet more clearly. As the reports of both the American and the British Councils of Churches on atomic power point out, the threatening new power in the hands of men is but an intensification of the process of technical advance that has been going on for centuries. It is yet more obvious to-day that the deepest crisis of our time is not economic or political, or even moral, but cultural. The tragedy of modern society is that what it stands *for* is at variance with what it stands *on* (V. A. Demant: *C.N.-L.* No. 257).

The more men develop what is now in their heads, the farther it takes them from the desire of their hearts. The Christian response remains the same, the demonstration of "the design of God in the disorder of man."

The last phrase is the general theme proposed for the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1948. Since the World Council takes over the responsibilities of the "Universal Christian Council on Life and Work" we may conveniently examine the task in front of Life and Work under the plans for the World Assembly, although that Assembly will also be a *Faith and Order* concern. But thus we can consider finally under the World Council one remaining outstanding issue.

The general theme of "The Design of God and the Disorder of Man" is to be faced, in preparation for the Assembly, under four heads, each of which will be an international commission, preparing a volume of essays for the Assembly, through a widespread scheme of study and criticism of papers, comparable to the process so effectively employed in preparation for the Oxford Conference. The four commissions have these titles:

The Church Universal in the Design of God.
The Proclamation of the Gospel of God.
The Church and the Disorder of Society.
The World Church and World Order.

These four themes (taken together with a fifth, the basic examination of the nature of biblical authority in the political and social message of the Church) thus represent the questions on which the resources of the ecumenical movement centrally will be concentrated in the next two years. Their present formulation is tentative; it is liable to considerable modification in the process of sounding and resounding the best minds in Christendom which can be induced to lend themselves to the co-operative enterprise. The I.M.C. and the *Faith and Order* movement will contribute to these studies as well as conducting their own independent ones. Roman Catholic collaborators will perhaps once more give their unofficial co-operation at various points. They represent the main problems under consideration in the unity movement to-day—and they are all questions turning on the quality of the Christian witness. They are all, ultimately, questions about holiness, about the manifestation of God in the world of sin.

The World Council of Churches.—Finally, the fact that the World Council of Churches stands on the threshold of passing from a proposal to a formally constituted body presents what to many minds is the sharpest question in the whole ecumenical movement, the question of *its own nature.* It might be said that all Christian theology is a rationalization of Christian experience. The growth of the ecumenical movement is an outstanding experience in the recent history of Christians. What is its theological meaning? There can be no doubt that the living God has been doing things in and with His people in this forty years' complex of prayer, friendship, study, pronouncement, agreement and disagreement. What is the *meaning* of what He has done?

Above all, what is its meaning in relation to the tradition received in our various Churches about the nature and authority of the Church?

Various partial, and sometimes misleading, explanations are offered. There are some who would dismiss the World Council from any serious meaning because, taking refuge in a doctrine of the Invisible Church as the only true Church, they dismiss both the Churches and the meeting together of Churches, as of no more than administrative convenience. But a biblical theology can never rest content with the Church as ontologically only invisible. Others can talk of the eventual goal as a federation of churches. If by that they mean a federation of bodies whose independent validity is unaffected by their federation, again the New Testament will not allow them so to speak. If they mean that the mere federation constitutes the Churches into the Church, so that they are ready to acclaim the World Council *as* the World Church, they stand equally condemned. It has none of the recognized *notæ ecclesiæ*, no agreed doctrine, no recognized ministry, no full communion in sacraments. On the one hand, we must say firmly that such a Council is emphatically not the *Church*. On the other hand, since the Churches must have *some* relationship to the *Una sancta ecclesia* of the Creed, so must the place in which they meet each other. For those who hold that church authority has always had some relationship to bishops, there is the further question of the nature of a body which contains bishops, but others beside.

The constitution of the World Council expressly repudiated for itself any authority or the right to take any action except such as is committed to it by one or more of its constituent Churches (par. IV of the constitution). Is it, then, merely an administrative convenience, a purely consultative body, whose existence brings into the world *nothing* of any Christian significance? Would God be as fully manifest to His people if it did not exist? To say so would seem to some to deny the Holy Spirit. With the ecumenical movement a *new factor* has entered church history—and so universal history. God has given something to His people through the exchanges which the ecumenical movement has meant and *without that movement the gift could not have been given.* At least it has that significance, that it was the *occasion* whereby God could reveal things which, without it, the Churches could not have learned. We expect of its future meetings, not any constitutional authority at all, but that they will again be occasions when, because Christians are met in Christ's name, the Spirit may speak to the Church, speak with His own final authority, but only known to have done so when the conscience of the Church recognizes His voice.

The pronouncements of the Council have just that amount of authority which the Churches are led by the Spirit of God to accord to them. This whole subject was ably opened up in a preparatory memorandum for the February Committees by Dr Visser 't Hooft. It will be published in the American *Christendom* and will be one of the basic papers for the first of the four Assembly preparatory commissions. Meanwhile the problem raises for us all the question of the nature of *all* church authority.

It is good to be realistic about the World Council of Churches.

Ninety-five "Churches" are ready to join. They include all the main blocks of traditional Protestantism throughout the world. But we must recognize a stiffening Confessionalism, especially among Lutherans, which dislikes fraternizing. The Lutheran Missouri Synod in U.S.A. is outside—and might coax other Lutherans to set "World Lutheranism" first. The "Southern Baptists" are outside—and other types of rigid Protestantism sympathize with them. All the provinces of the Anglican Communion in the world are in (except the South African), though they are only kept happy about the threat of the "pan-Protestant *bloc*" by the co-operation of the Orthodox. But the Orthodox situation is shaky. Before the war, Russia-in-exile, Greece and Yugoslavia contributed notably; the Russian Church at that time was suppressed—and the rest of the Orthodox world is more notable for venerable traditions than for vital theology or for social effectiveness. To-day, the attitude to the ecumenical movement of the Moscow Patriarchate is unknown—at any rate to the ecumenical movement. The Orthodox Church in the Russian zone of influence is awaiting Moscow's lead. Many Orthodox leaders personally take a prominent part, but as for *Churches* the Greek Church has not yet committed itself formally and the only Orthodox applicants are the Orthodox Churches of Esthonia and Latvia (now absorbed into Moscow and the U.S.S.R.), and the branches of the Roumanian and Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Churches situated in the U.S.A. Finally, the whole Roman Communion, comprising over one-third of Christendom, is categorically outside the movement. The *World* Council of Churches may well seem an absurdly pretentious title.

But the word *Churches* may arouse equal misgiving. It is frankly untenable on any New Testament basis, for it is used of bodies of Christians co-existing in the same areas in which, in New Testament language, there can be only one Church. It is used of bodies to whom the title "Church" cannot, in the opinion of many, be rightly applied, though opinions vary about where the line should be drawn. Can we, and especially can those who take seriously the Catholic tradition of Christendom, counter the charge that the whole crazy situation is a product of wishful thinking and of loose theology?

Obviously at this stage of my paper I cannot begin a serious answer to that question. However, my failure to do so is not because the question is unimportant, but because it is so important that it is the task of the *whole* ecumenical movement to contribute to its answer. The salient facts are these. First, the chaos of contemporary Christendom is so great that only revolutionary action can redeem it, and by revolutionary I mean that radical action, cutting to the very heart of man, which only God can take. Secondly, those whom the ecumenical movement has really touched know by the interior testimony of the Spirit that in it they have seen evidences of the only Power who can heal our distress. Thirdly, therefore, the fact of the ecumenical movement is one with which the Churches as they are must come to terms, for it has proved itself the place in which all the Churches are faced with the Church which they all conceal and yet which they all confess.

What, in this same distress, can we say together? What indeed but

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison? The true hope of the ecumenical movement is that it may be the place where *Churches* find penitence.

"Has history ever seen a truly repentant *Church*? Must the phrase 'moral man and immoral society' apply to the Church as to secular orderings of society? The disunity of Christendom is so glaring a sin that a gathering of repentant Churches may come to pass. There is, indeed, no escape from this hard solution. If under God's rule over His people, this miracle could happen, even the centuries of disunity would find redemption." (T. O. Wedel: *The Coming Great Church*, p. 121.)

The Evangelical Church in Germany spoke at Stuttgart last October and spoke in a penitence which made possible the healing of wounds. Her words have been echoed, with greater or less understanding, by the Church in Holland, France, Norway, the United States, and Britain. In some countries, the penitence learned in suffering and the life which flows from it is already threatened again by the reassertion of complacency and fear. Within the ecumenical movement, our deepest duty to each other is not to allow each other to rest in anything less than our own deepest insights and experiences; to challenge each other continuously in the name of Him who condemns and forgives us all alike.

The final meaning of the ecumenical movement is found if it is indeed the place to which God is pointing, where not merely individual souls, but *Churches*, may die by repentance and so be raised to holiness, in which alone is unity.

OLIVER TOMKINS.

The Parish Meeting

WHAT is the special job of the Church to-day? It would appear that at all times one of its jobs is to relate the pressures and forces of the whole environment of men to the smaller field of their personal activity in such a way that men and women are able to live creatively and fully. Their true place is not that of subordination, neither is it that of arrogance. Men are to serve in certain ways just because they are men and not gods. They are to act creatively and to accept moral responsibility in others because they are made in the image of God. They become puppets and cease to be men when they disclaim the latter; they are idiots when they reject the former.

The particular job of our time is presented to us in terms of human relationships. On what basis and in what ways are men and women to be tied together or built up into social groups so that they may live, one with another, a life which is not stultifying, frustrating and offensive to God? There is no need to elaborate here the pressures which emphasize this problem. They are equally obvious in the feverish irrationalities of anti-semitism and the colour bar, the sexual strain and the wave of gambling. Every secular body is perturbed by them. But the solutions offered or suggested, as Fr Thornton pointed out, "cancel one another out, for none of them represents the whole which corresponds to human nature as God intends it."[1] Not by the choice

[1] *The Common Life in the Body of Christ*, p. 1.

of some other partial framework for living do we remedy the shortcomings of the one we know. Not by the ingenious method of dovetailing the plans of innumerable Ministries and Boards do we discover the life we seek for. A new distortion only is added by such means. The fullness of life of which He spoke was dependent upon that "I in you, you in Me" relationship which He imparted to the Twelve. It is this which is the starting-point of our concern for social life and the problems which it raises now. "The mystical aspect of the Church as Christ's Body must be held to be its primary aspect." It is out of this and nothing else that we look for the cleansing, purifying and reinvigorating of human life. In this and nowhere else do we find the pattern of the common life.

The question which arises now is how far do we believe this and act on faith in it in parish life? How far do we endeavour to deliver that which we have received? It is true that in every service of the Holy Communion, implicitly and explicitly, the character of the Mystical Body is affirmed. Holy Baptism and the Catechism still remind us of our membership. The widespread extension of the Parish Communion is some evidence of a change in attitude which makes more possible an awareness of the nature of the Body to which the worshippers belong. But it may well be asked whether those who speak of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ have wrestled with the problem of conceiving it in terms of parish life. Our question may be simply put this way. This "fellowship" of the Church derives its name and being from the *koinonia* of the New Testament experience, from the one-time fishing partnership transformed into an instrument and evidence of the divine activity. It implies things held and done in common. What have our churchgoing people got in common? What have they got in common which pertains to them as Christians and not to the rest of the so-called "community"? True, they exhibit often the marks of a vigorous social life, and have elaborated dozens of expressive forms for it. True, there are congregations whose acts of worship are wholehearted and sincere. But we have only to read the chapter-headings of Fr Thornton's *Common Life in the Body of Christ* to be confronted with something which goes beyond all this. "Sonship, participation in the sufferings of Christ, the Church as the fullness of Christ," these and many more, what do they mean and how do they find expression in parochial life? It seems clear that having goods in common was almost incidental in New Testament experience, because far greater things were held in common, rather than that it represented a peak of adventure once scaled and then abandoned. To us their words must seem almost an idle dream.

It is by no means unusual to find in Church life described as vigorous and active one feature which surely calls for comment. All the theological terms employed in it will speak of unity, of a life organic in its nature. All the practice will point in the other direction, so that every grouping of men, women and children, every interest and activity which they may care to indulge, has its appropriate organization. The parish magazine will bear upon its cover an impressive list of these, and the assembling of the congregation will be frequently the

public parade of several of them. One body will make its "corporate communion" at such a time, another will be assembled at Evensong. While no one doubts the legitimacy of organizations, their centrifugal tendencies are widely known, and the parishes of the country are thronged with bodies which hold a more or less indistinct relation to the Church. Indeed they have gone far to destroy the possibility of "common life," having erected sectional loyalties deep and strong enough to be obstructive of such a thing.

It is over against this that we set the experience described in the New Testament and try to see how far we have departed from it. Most immediately relevant are the Epistles to the Corinthians, where most obviously the metaphor of the Body is made the basis of the apostle's treatment of almost all the questions which affect Church life. Significantly it is as a member of the Body that he writes and acts. But we not only know a church life fragmentary where it should be organic or closely knit, but are also so largely dependent in our practice upon someone who contrives to be outside and above the conflict of the parts. We look for leadership from a parson, from a diocesan organizer, from a Commission, and know little or nothing of the seeking of the mind of the Spirit through the Body. Indeed it is questionable whether the ordinary Anglican ever thinks of such a thing. Professing a high doctrine of the Church, he falls back in practice upon someone who will give a lead. The parson, in turn, with similar profession, is accustomed by training and tradition to undertake that job. Under God, "it all depends on me." The apostolic injunction, "Be ye all of one mind," the apostolic experience, "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us," are treated as matters which bear no weight in practice.

But we cannot so easily escape our task. If it be true that the Church is the "epistle written in fleshly terms," and is, in the words of the Report on the Conversion of England, "the ultimate evidence for the credibility of the Gospel," is above all His Mystical Body, then plainly we are called upon to discover and exhibit this character. It is as a process of discovery that we should wish the Parish Meeting to be regarded.

By "Parish Meeting" we mean simply the regular weekly assembly of the congregation both "to be the Church" and to do as a Church all those things which properly belong to its life. It comes together to realize its own nature in exactly the same way that any family assembles. The things that are done together, important as they are, are nevertheless not so important as the life to which they contribute. In the same way that "all those nameless unremembered acts of love" contribute to that married state which signifies "the mystical union which is betwixt Christ and His Church," all our purposes, deliberations and actions in the Parish Meeting enter, enrich and are lost to sight in the life of the Church. Visibly and deliberately its members are there because they know they are members of His Body. What they will do, what He would have them do, and how they will do it, is something to be disclosed and laid hold of in and through the Meeting. How else were Saul and Barnabas set apart for their work?

Once we face squarely the kind of thing which the Parish Meeting is meant to be, it seems strange that we should ever have tried to do without it. The Body which assembles "to make Eucharist" has other things to do and the neglect of them must inevitably tell upon the eucharistic action. The struggle to carry men's minds beyond the term of making "my communion" is considerably eased if we can begin from any experience of common life elsewhere. It is to this that the Parish Meeting makes its immense contribution. People who are accustomed to the practice of bringing every part of their Church life into the focus which the Parish Meeting affords can never easily think in sectional terms again. But even more important is the process which we could call "inflow" and "outflow." A church which knows something of the common life, whose members are continuously taking part in common thinking and acting, offers itself, its life and work, quite naturally and obviously. The imperfections and failures are common knowledge, the difficulties are common experience, the relation of the whole to the Universal Church and its Head has in some way been recognized, *before* the Body makes its confession, prays for strength, and gladly and deliberately, under the forms of bread and wine, lays itself upon the altar. Similarly the Parish Meeting *after* each Eucharist, like a battery recharged, is more aware of its jobs, more capable of tackling them, more sensitive to the conditions surrounding them.

It should be understood that we are here concerned with experience already gained in a number of parishes rather than with ideas of what we should like the Church to be. The Parish Meeting has been at work in different kinds of parishes, town and country, in some cases for several years. A beginning is usually made by the parish priest describing to the congregation, including the Parochial Church Council, the nature of the Church, the character of its life, and the intention to try to realize this in practice. An invitation is then given to all who will to come together to talk this out, and thereafter to continue to meet as one Body, with the same regularity and deliberateness that we should give to coming to the Parish Communion. It is for all of us a venture of faith, a going out not knowing whither we go. It can and should have a spirit at once serious and gay. It should be informal in its methods, omnivorous in its interests, friendly in its tone.

Some questions have already been asked about the Parish Meeting. There are those, for example, who criticize the use of the word "parish" in this context, because, in fact, only a small proportion of those resident in the parish actually attend. The same criticism applies, of course, to the "Parish Communion" and the same defence can be offered for both. The intention, expressed and upheld, is that all should come. In virtue of their baptism they are indeed asked to come. But if they do, if even a large number come, does the Parish Meeting work? We reply that so far the question is theoretical. So far the numbers of people who have joined week by week in meetings of this kind lie between 20 and 60. Beyond that number the intimacy and informality which we expect are lost. As with a human family, there is clearly an upper limit of numbers beyond which we cannot go. The Parish Meeting is not an attempt to hold a mass rally of Christians every week. But

no one will contend that mass meetings are the most desirable or effective ways of building up the finer values of our life. When and where we are confronted with growing numbers who desire to take part in parish meetings, we shall have to face the problem of "hiving off." But when that day comes, the parochial system will be entering upon a new chapter of its existence.

More frequently questions are asked about the actual program of each meeting. It offers a sad comment upon the state of affairs in parish life that so many people imagine that there is little to occupy the attention and energies of the local church for a meeting held every week, unless indeed you make it a prayer meeting or a study group. Praying together and studying topics as they arise are naturally part of the week-to-week action, but the agenda of the Parish Meeting ought always to be wider, more varied and elastic in character. Once it is grasped that all matters which affect life are properly the concern of the local church, the difficulty in practice is to find time to face them. Nevertheless, in early stages of the growth of the meeting, there are bound to be times when many people find it difficult both to speak in the meeting and to see any practical outcome for their efforts. When excitement and interest ebb and numbers dwindle, we are forced back upon the theological perception from which we began. The Bible offers no picture of progress as the world conceives of it, but continual attraction of men and their falling away. Four or five years' experience of the Parish Meeting may give us almost the same number of people who come regularly, and on many occasions the impression given to those who quickly despair is that we are almost back at the beginning in an attempt at understanding. A more faithful view sees how surer is the grasp of the nature of the Christian life, how wider is the understanding, how much more closely knit is the character of the life. The growth of this Body follows the same laws as those of natural growth. The continuity of it sometimes obscures the deep changes that are taking place within the Meeting. So we should no more dream of discontinuing the Parish Meeting once we have begun than we should discontinue the celebration of the Holy Communion. We have set out to recover one of the marks of the Apostolic Church and have reckoned in the cost of it.

In early stages much depends upon the incumbent of the parish. His attitude towards the Church is the fundamental thing. Does he, in fact, see himself as part of it with certain jobs to do in it, or does he regard himself as set over it, with all the detachment that circumstances foster? The problem of authority in the Church of England has not been and will not be settled by pronouncements from above. Only from the steady growth and acceptance of more organic nature in church life can we hope to derive that deep loyalty to its purposes which must underpin any basis of authority. Without it parish priest and bishop alike are powerless. But where the Parish Meeting builds up that solid core of men and women, humbled by the knowledge of the character of the Body they belong to, and deliberate in their self-committal, there are "differences of administration" and "diversities of operations," but it is "the same Spirit" which guides and inspires clergy

and people alike. Few things reveal themselves more clearly and more quickly than the readiness or the refusal of the incumbent to occupy a position within the Body of the local church. Only too often discussion will dry up because it is obvious that the leader does not really want to know what others think and why. At the beginning he must lead, stimulate and inspire, but, as in so many other aspects of the Christian life, in this discovery of the meaning of our membership of the Mystical Body "He must increase" and be found in the midst of the assembled Church.

Much more might be written of the experience already gained. The chief thing at issue is our will to try to bring the life of the Church in the parish something nearer to the apostolic pattern. Our parishes bear too many of the marks of the contemporary world, too few of the marks of the Body of Christ. It is significant that where the Church in our day has been persecuted, its practice has almost of necessity recovered something of this gathering of the faithful. For eyes that are open, the extension of this recovered experience of *koinonia* sees the land covered with innumerable groups of men and women, not turned in upon their "parochial" concerns in the worst sense of that word, but strong in the knowledge of inner vitality, and alert in their perception of the universal character of the Church. The Parish Meeting stands in relation to that larger body as the family stands to the nation. Imperial pretensions are no substitute for the health of the primary unit. "The *koinonia* is a focus of new relationships between God and man in Christ." The Parish Meeting is an attempt to return, in penitence and hope, to a birthright long despised.

ALAN ECCLESTONE.

The Glory of Christ in the Fourth Gospel—I

INTRODUCTION

(*a*) *The Johannine Conception of "Glory."*—St John uses the word "glory" more or less in the sense in which the Synoptics use "the kingdom of God" or "the kingdom of heaven." It indicates the quality of being from above, not of this world. But in contrast to the Synoptics, where the idea is quite impersonal, the Johannine "glory" is always a person or the attribute of a person.

It is impossible to give an altogether accurate definition of the term, since the transcendental cannot be imprisoned within the narrow bounds of words and ideas. Yet we may grasp some of its meaning through the constantly changing imagery which is used throughout the gospel to portray Christ, each one showing forth a different aspect of His glory. In the constant change and kaleidoscopic combination of these various images, we meet a Person who reaches beyond their familiar sphere.

(*b*) *The Sacramental Character of St John's Gospel.*—It is characteristic of St John that his images should almost always be taken from ordinary life: thus Christ speaks of Himself as bread, water, the way and the

door, and so links His heavenly glory to the most common and most necessary things of our daily life, the things that satisfy our bodily needs. He is as necessary to us as water, bread, the door and the road, but because it is He who meets us in these common things He lifts them above the material plane and gives them a new quality. The power transmitted to them from above lifts them out of their earthly, well-known context and makes them symbols of heavenly glory. They are at one and the same time both from below and from above, the divine transmuting their familiar forms. It is precisely in this duality that the sacramentalism of St John's gospel lies.

Just as bread, water, door and way are given this twofold character, material and spiritual, so St John always makes us aware of the twofold nature of Christ. Christ in St John is always at one and the same time both man and God; as man, He speaks, acts, suffers and dies, yet always remaining the only-begotten of the Father.

(*c*) *Eternal Life*.—Whenever eternal life is mentioned in the Fourth Gospel, it is not referred to as something in the future, dependent perhaps on Christ's Second Coming; to have eternal life is to share in the glory of Christ and it begins here and now for the believer ("I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live "; *cf.* also iii, 16; vi, 68; viii, 51). Christ has walked on this earth as man in His divine glory and so has brought eternity into time, giving men eternal life with Him already in this world. Of course this does not mean that we have access to the full glory here and now; but the sharp Pauline division between here and beyond, now and then, is unknown to St John. For St John the death of the body is not a break but a point of transition in the eternal life begun already on this earth. The thing that matters is not whether we are here or there but whether we are in union with Christ.

Thus every moment in which we experience a complete oneness with the will of God has the character of eternity. Here again we find that sacramental aspect already mentioned above. In the short period of time allotted to us here on earth, we can partake of life eternal and of the glory of Christ through communion with Him.

In St John's gospel Christ is so intimately bound up with the other two Persons of the Trinity that in some places we can perceive in Him the glory of the Father and in others that of the Holy Spirit. An attempt will be made in what follows to indicate where, in St John's revelation of Christ, the glory of the Father predominates, where all the light is focused on the Son's own glory, and where the Holy Spirit can be especially clearly perceived. If we want to picture to ourselves these three aspects of the glory of Christ, we may use the following images:

1. Christ in the likeness of Adam, creaturely, naked, dependent, and overshadowed by the cloud of the Father's glory.
2. Christ the mediator, outstretched between God and man, the life of God flowing through Him.
3. Christ, from within the Holy Spirit, pouring forth to mankind streams of living water.

Or, to illustrate the same three aspects by using John i, 14:

1. Christ as the only-begotten Son partakes of *the glory of the Father*;

2. In the voluntary humiliation and sacrifice of the crucifixion we see *the Son's own glory;*

3. That we can see the glory of Christ at all and can grasp its truth (*i.e.*, its reality) is the work of *the Holy Spirit* proceeding from Christ.

In spite of all this we must not forget that the Father is the source from which all flows and that in the end all glory has its origin in Him, even though we speak of the glory of the other Persons of the Trinity. As we say in worship in the Lord's Prayer: "Thine is . . . the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

1. The Glory of the Father in Christ

(*a*) *The O.T. Tradition of the Glory of God in the Gospels.*—The O.T. knew only of God's hidden glory. True, a few chosen individuals like the prophets had been allowed to hear His voice, but the sight of His glory was denied even to Moses. He was allowed to see only God's back. "For man shall not see me and live" (Ex. xxxiii, 20).

No wonder it was so difficult for the disciples grown up in the O.T. tradition to apprehend and surrender to "the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Similarly the Synoptics have a certain reticence in showing Christ as the Son of God, and the earlier the gospel the later in the narrative is the Messianic secret revealed.

It is otherwise in St John, for whom the life of Christ pervades everything, leading him far beyond the half-lights of the O.T. into the full light of N.T. revelation. What he had perhaps only grasped in part when his Master spoke to him in the flesh was revealed to him later by the Spirit—namely, that in Jesus Christ God has given to man the full revelation of His glory. The limitations of the O.T. have been overcome; we have been allowed to see and to live in the glory of God. What is more, we are not just allowed to go on existing, we only begin to live when we accept God's revelation of Himself ("I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly"—x, 11).

(*b*) *The Glory of the Father in the Pre-existent and Glorified Christ.*—Even though in St John's revelation of Christ the Son, the incarnate Godhead, is revealed completely, the veil is not altogether lifted from the glory of the Father. True, Christ says of Himself, "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father," but that is valid only in a certain sense. The Father, the hidden God of O.T. tradition, the Creator of heaven and earth, is revealed sparingly and by implication even in the Christ of the Fourth Gospel.

One such implied revelation of the Father through the Son is given in the Prologue, which speaks of the pre-existence of Christ and calls Him Creator and Lord of the world. Similarly in the passages about Christ's return to the Father—*e.g.*, xvi, 28 and xvii, 5 ("And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was"). Here we breathe the air of Creation, and surely the air of the Apocalypse too; the first and last book of the Bible, Alpha and Omega, blend into unison where the glory of the Father is most clearly revealed in the Son.

(*c*) *The Glory of the Father in the Signs of Christ.*—The seven signs related by St John are presented as seven great rifts breaking through the clouds of the O.T. tradition which hid the glory of God from the Jews. The person of the Son did not suffice for them; a love which gives its life for its friends had no power to convince them. Jesus had to appeal to His contemporaries in the way in which they were most accustomed to see the operation of the hand of God—by miracles, by power over the forces of nature, by healing and raising the dead. How well this shows the spiritual poverty of mankind—a perfect character, free from sin and as far removed from fallen humanity as heaven is from earth, has no power to convince as long as it does not bring the testimony of the miracle as a guarantee.

Jesus recognized this human perversion and said: "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake" (xiv, 11; x, 38) and "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

St John, after relating the first sign, makes it quite clear that this is given primarily as a proof of the divinity of Christ; a proof that He belongs to the Father (though of course the signs also meet a real case of need). "This beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested his glory" (ii, 11). The miracles in the Fourth Gospel are called "signs"; they are guarantees, tokens that His glory is genuine and comes from the Father. There could scarcely be a clearer way of showing how the New Revelation is testified to by the Old. The glory of the Father, shining forth in the Son, was given to strengthen and confirm those who were still doubtful at the sight of the Son's glory. "But the witness which I have is greater than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (v, 36).

In the Synoptic Gospels there is on the whole a different relation between faith and miracle. There faith is the necessary pre-condition for the miracle (*cf.* the healing of the man sick of the palsy, the Syro-Phœnician woman, the woman with an issue of blood, etc.). Faith there is the servant of miracle, whereas in St John the miracle is always the servant of faith; and indeed St John proclaims that the purpose of his whole gospel is to arouse faith (xx, 30-31). This could be supported by an example from every one of the seven signs, but perhaps it is shown most clearly in the sixth and seventh. In the sixth, the healing of the man blind from birth, it is clearly stated that the blindness was intended to serve the revelation of God ("Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be manifested in him," ix, 3). In the seventh and last sign, which is in many ways mysteriously related to His own life, Jesus, hearing of Lazarus' illness, says: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God" (xi, 4). At the tomb we get the unbelieving Jews and Martha, who believes in Christ in her own way but doubts of His power to raise her brother there and then. The words of Jesus, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (xi, 40), do not state the condition necessary for the miracle to happen, but are an exhortation to deeper faith. It is made quite plain that the miracle

is being performed to make men believe and to testify to Christ's origin: "Because of the multitude which standeth around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me" (xi, 42). And after the miracle has been performed we read: "Many therefore of the Jews which . . . beheld that which he did believed on him" (xi, 45). In St John the miracle is not the child of faith, but faith is begotten by the miracle.

(*d*) *The Glory of the Father in the Transfigured Christ.*—In the Synoptics, the occasion when Christ is shown most clearly in the glory of the Father is the Transfiguration. In the Fourth Gospel we hear nothing of the Transfiguration; unless we take the voice from heaven in xii, 28 as its counterpart. But even then St John apparently gives us only a pale reflection of what happened, according to the Synoptics, on the Mount of Transfiguration: no glistening or shining from Christ's face or garments, no Moses or Elijah appearing—nothing but a voice from heaven, not even recognized as such or understood by the people standing round.

Does the Christ of St John's Gospel then partake less of the glory of the Father? No, the very opposite. In St John's presentation, Christ is from the beginning so completely surrounded by the glory of the Father, not only in the Prologue, but later by the continually repeated reference to His oneness with the Father, that a specific Transfiguration becomes superfluous and would perhaps be scarcely possible. St John's Christ is always on the Mount and moves constantly in a diffused light of Transfiguration.

Just because the glory of the Father so radiates from the Person of Christ, it is difficult to do what is proposed—to distinguish the glory peculiar to the Father from the whole of Christ's glory. Perhaps an example will best show where the difficulty lies on the one hand, and on the other that, though the dividing lines are not very clear, there are some real differences. There are two ways by which a father may endow his son: by heredity a son receives of his father's own nature (his build, his talents, his intellect); by education and living together, traits of character and shades of the father's personality that cannot be inherited are passed on to him. Yet it is quite impossible to distinguish which of the characteristics are due to heredity and which to the father's influence.

If we were to apply this to Christ (with reservations), He, as God's Son, is already born with "heavenly glory," it is part of His very nature; and this, for our purpose, we would call the Son's own glory. Through the unbroken union with the Father, over and above this, glory continually passes from the Father to the Son, and this we have just discussed as being the glory of the Father in the Son. It is as impossible to separate this exactly from the Son's own glory of which we propose to speak in the next section as it is impossible to distinguish between inherited and acquired features in a human personality.

PAULA VON MIRTOW.

(*To be concluded.*)

Whose is Fountains Abbey?

THE projected restoration of Fountains Abbey by Roman Catholics ought not to make Anglicans envious. For us at least the religious life must mean something different from a return to a picturesque medievalism. We shall understand our Catholic heritage the better for facing what this sort of thing implies.

The plundering of the monasteries was, as most honest men will agree, a vile and brutal act. Yet there are those who say that monasticism was dying before Henry VIII killed it. If that is not quite true (and the persistent nature of certain communities seems to suggest that it is not), at any rate it contains too much truth to be ignored. In so far as it was an institution out of touch with the best features of its own times sixteenth-century monasticism must have been doomed. On similar grounds we may be sure that, although monasticism has something vital to say to our generation, it will have to be a twentieth-century monasticism.

Modern Catholics, both Roman and Anglican, are too often content to dwell upon cultural accidents rather than seek into religious substance. Is it because of infection from the Romantic Movement that in Cardinal Newman's essays on the Benedictines we are confronted with a picture of monasticism *suffused with something else*? Let us eschew the words "aestheticism" and "nostalgia" and call it a sentiment protestant against rationalism. Newman was too great a writer to let it betray him beyond a certain point. But an idealizing of the archaic has become a fashion which others have picked up, from him or elsewhere, with dangerous facility—not least in "Catholic" literature.

People whose critical faculties have not succumbed to this sort of narcotic—and there are still some in the Church of England—are painfully aware that the ennobling associations of old buildings and old ways have an important place in the Church of Christ on condition that they are the relevant expression of living religion. If such things, after centuries of desuetude, are fished out to be used as stage properties—then something theatrical will continue to attach to them. The penalty for bad judgment in this kind is that another judgment always follows.

If, while allowing ourselves some legitimate room for cherishing historic paraphernalia, we would also try to learn the lessons of history, we might avoid some of the pitfalls lying ahead. In this instance of Fountains Abbey it is instructive to notice the spirit in which Richard the Prior and twelve monks with him left St Mary's, York, in 1132 to start the new house. In the first place they were not going back to an ancestral ruin; they were in the vanguard of the newest thing known—namely, the Cistercian movement. The brethren were not out to restore an ancient relic but to build *de novo* in the style of the day. And secondly the valley of the Skell was not chosen for its scenic amenities: the romantic attitude to pastoral landscape did not affect Englishmen before the eighteenth century. The site was, in fact, so wretched and forbidding that these men, far from being escapists,

were going forth where few would envy them. Having gone into the wilderness they succeeded in glorifying God because their monasticism showed the Christian life in agrarian terms to an agrarian age. The process of making sinful men into saints had its social reflection in the making of forest into farm. Catholicism was a real force there because men could see in the Church a vital union between the timeless and the contemporary. In view of that, the first thing for moderns to notice in studying the Rule of St Benedict is that he nowhere bids the would-be monk to sell all that he has in order to buy period furniture.

As it stands, Fountains Abbey (though a ruin and because a ruin) is an effectual witness to the true glory of Catholicism; resuscitated it can only be a doubtful advertisement for Roman Catholicism. That distinction will persist in a disunited Church. The evils of the Reformation cannot be undone simply by claims to Catholicism but by obedience to truth and charity—all truth and all charity, even in unexpected places—in our time. Without that, the attempts of religious enthusiasts to put back the clock are always likely to be unhappy.

B. A. Smith.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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NOTES

The Rev. G. K. Tibbatts, Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, has copies to spare of an English translation of a sermon preached by Pastor Niemöller in the Lutherkirche, Osnabruck, on February 10, 1946. He will gladly post a copy to any reader of Theology who sends him a stamped and addressed envelope.

Whoever it is that regularly sends a copy of Theology to the Rev. C. T. Wood, formerly of Kimberley Club, Kimberley, is asked to note that his address now is St John's Hostel, Upper Kloof Street, Cape Town.

Mrs Vibert, 18 Camden Crescent, Bath, has a waiting list of missionaries overseas who would be thankful to receive copies of Theology from readers at home. Will any subscribers who are willing to forward their copies in this way please communicate with her.

BOOK REVIEWS

The First Epistle of St Peter. Edited by Edward Gordon Selwyn. Macmillan. 25s.

A really scientific commentary on 1 Peter has long been needed by English theology; the last full-dress edition was that of Bigg in I.C.C. some fifty years ago.

Unfortunately it must be said at once that the Dean of Winchester has not met this need. The primary problem of authorship is the question—Who in the early Church could produce this admirable essay in rhythmical prose of the Attic type? (It is not a question of a poetic mind, as he suggests; 1 Peter is not poetry but rhetorical prose which succeeds in being beautiful and not merely "pretty-pretty" because of the author's obvious sincerity and the intrinsic dignity of his theme.) But Selwyn nowhere quotes Norden's great work; he even discusses the peculiar list of regions to which the supposed letter is addressed on the lines of Hort, not noticing that it is simply intended to produce a good rhythmical effect. The argument that Silvanus in v, 12 may have been the draftsman, not merely the messenger, that he may be Paul's companion Silas, that he may have been the draftsman of the Thessalonian letters, fails to meet the point. For 1 and 2 Thessalonians are, next to Galatians, the low-water mark of Pauline style; Paul himself can write good rhetorical prose in a variety of styles, as he does in Rom. i, 18-22, 1 Cor. i, 18 *ff.*, and Colossians. But on this string of possibilities it is assumed that Silas may have been the author and resemblances between 1 Peter and Thessalonians are used to confirm the theory on every possible occasion without regard to the possibility either that the resemblances are due to the common stock of Christian ideas in the post-Pauline churches or to borrowing by "Peter."

The fact is that the epistle is simply an essay in the adaptation of Christianity to Hellenism. The dominating theme is, as Selwyn rightly points out, the imitation of Christ. But this is Hellenistic, not Jewish. The Lucan Christ is a pattern to be imitated; the Marcan Christ is not, except for a few sayings from the original tradition which have been preserved as by accident (*e.g.*, Mark viii, 34 and x, 45). But the protagonists of the theme in the N.T. are "Peter"and Hebrews. Yet Mark is by tradition the companion and expounder of the Apostle.

Similarly the note on regeneration is very weak. Selwyn may be right in refusing to admit the influence of mystery-religions in the development of this idea, but he should not quote the saying that "a proselyte is like a babe new-born" as evidence, for the rabbinical saying does not mean that he has undergone an inward spiritual change but that he is delivered from the burden of guilt for past sins. In any case the question cannot be discussed without any reference to the Corpus Hermeticum and the magical papyri, neither of which are once referred to. It is probable that the real way of derivation, as often in the N.T., is from popular philosophy, which itself was borrowing from the language of the mysteries; Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* 5. 2, 15. 2) may well be on the right track. It is quite unsafe to suppose that it is enough to refute Perdelwitz and almost to ignore Reitzenstein.

Again, it is very unsafe to deal at length with the descent into Hades and to ignore Kroll's great work. Here Selwyn is very unsatisfactory in dealing with 1 Peter iii, 19 *ff.* He is quite wrong in supposing that Rom. x, 6-8 has anything to do with a descent; it is a variation of the well-known Stoic theme, popular in Hellenistic Judaism, that we can know God or practise virtue without climbing to heaven or going

down to the depth of the sea like pearl-divers (Philo, Q.O.P.L. 66). Nor is Eph. iv, 9 or Phil. ii, 10 to the point (*cf.* my *St Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, pp. 222 *f.*).

On the other hand, the commentary is often valuable and suggestive, though overloaded with quotations from commentators who are now out of date and parallels which, though interesting, are not really relevant. I would particularly commend the treatment of iv, 6, one of the hardest passages in the whole of the N.T. Selwyn's view that it has nothing to do with the "larger hope" but is intended to explain that Christians, who have died before the Parousia, will have their place at the last Judgment and are not lost, does give a satisfactory interpretation of the Greek and seems to me definitely right.

Of course it is possible that he would claim that his object in writing is not to meet the needs of the purely critical scholars but to supply material for homiletic exegesis. This he has done in abundant measure; even if the measure is sometimes excessive, the critic cannot complain since such abundance will probably be welcomed by those for whom the book is intended. Of course there is also much that is of value to the scholar; the pity is that there is so much that he cannot accept without a careful scrutiny which will often reveal grave weaknesses. Thus the essay on the primitive Christian catechism contains much valuable material but seems to me to attempt far too much in the way of proving connexion with a common source and not to allow for the probability that "Peter" is quite largely drawing on earlier writers, as "Paul" draws on Colossians in writing Ephesians. (Selwyn appears to assume the authenticity of Ephesians, which is at least highly dubious.)

There is an admirable note by Dr D. Daube on the use of the participle as an imperative in Romans and 1 Peter; he seems to me to make out a case for dependence on the usage of rabbinical Hebrew. This is a point of first-class importance, as showing the influence of Jewish usage on Jewish-Christian writers, who are really good writers of Greek, and the formation of a specifically Christian *koine*.

Pembroke College
Cambridge.

Wilfred L. Knox.

Christian History in the Making. By J. McLeod Campbell. Press and Publications Board. Cloth Edition. 15s. 6d. Paper 10s. 6d.

This book will take its place at once as an authoritative work on the worldwide expansion of the Anglican Communion. It brings within reasonable compass a mass of information hitherto accessible only in missionary records and biographies. It tells a story of individual and group enterprises overseas that were met only too often with official lethargy at home; and it discusses with great insight the process by which the Anglican Church has taken root in other lands and has gradually adjusted itself to its new position as no longer just an insular body but a worldwide Church.

In his first chapter on "The Infancy of the Anglican Communion" Canon McLeod Campbell recalls the two traditions that went into our founding—the Celtic and the Continental. He quotes some words

of Prof. Oman: "The Celtic Church produced many great saints and many devoted missionaries, but it was always lacking in order and organization. Fervour and ascetic self-sacrifice are essential virtues for those who have to build up a Church, but for those who have to administer a Church already solidly constituted, tact, practical wisdom and a broad spirit of charity are also necessary."

Canon Campbell sees the story of the coming of Christianity to Britain written large in the later expansion of Anglicanism. He reminds us of "A Pre-Episcopal Period" when the Church's work extended to the American colonies and the trading posts of the East India Company in the first century of S.P.G. and S.P.C.K. history. He gives us a vivid picture of the missionary planning at home at the turn of the eighteenth century when C.M.S. was founded—all of it carried out by private groups in face of official blindness or caution. And he tells the story of the pioneer work, insufficiently recognized to-day, which was done by German and Danish missionaries in default of recruits from England. This "Celtic" era ended with the regularization of the work overseas by the founding of seven sees in the New World, India and Australasia.

The middle three chapters describe the advance of the Anglican Church in Africa and the Far East and its approach to the other two monotheistic faiths of Judaism and Mohammedanism. Many great figures—Bishops Heber and Selwyn, Corfe and Bickersteth, Henry Martyn and George Lefroy, Douglas Thornton and Temple Gairdner —pass across the stage and splendid moments of Anglican history live again. Surely, one feels, the time is overdue for an enrichment of our Calendar with post-Reformation names.

The last three chapters are the most important. In them Canon Campbell seeks to assess the results that have been achieved. What methods of evangelism have survived the test of experience? Has the Church been firmly planted? How far have Evangelical zeal and Catholic order been blended in the process of Anglican expansion?

This last question raises the whole question of the nature of Anglicanism. Canon Campbell's own standpoint is clear. "There have been times," he writes in the opening chapter, " when the two [streams] have shown a tendency to flow apart or in parallel channels or when one has absorbed the other: the stream has flowed strongest when the two tributaries have blended their waters in one." If this be a true insight into the distinctive character of our Church, certain questions are inevitably raised. What of the "monochrome" dioceses and provinces that have sprung up as the result of the labours of missionary societies associated with one tradition in Anglicanism only? What variations in standards of doctrine and in the development of indigenous forms are permissible within the context of a "whole" Anglicanism? In answer to such questions Canon Campbell traces the various attempts to find a centre for Anglican unity down to the pronouncements of the last Lambeth Conference. It is a subject that calls for much hard thinking in a Church that would never tolerate an Anglican Curia at Lambeth or anywhere else.

Closely related is the place of the missionary societies in the next

stages of the growth of the Anglican Communion. Is there need for some transfer of responsibility from them to the Church as a whole? Canon Campbell gives reasons for thinking that there is, while at the same time he praises unstintingly their record of service. He offers no cut-and-dried solution of the problem he raises, but he provides much material for examination and discussion.

Indeed, no one who cares about the future relations of the various branches of the Anglican Communion and their continued partnership in the still far from finished work of evangelization can fail to ponder deeply Canon Campbell's stimulating review of all our missionary policy and strategy. He has given us a book which reveals missionary statesmanship of a very high order.

C. K. Sansbury.

Scholae Cancellarii,
Lincoln.

Bishoprick Papers. By H. Hensley Henson. Oxford University Press. 16s.

He stood with head erect among the ostriches. This may well prove to be the verdict of history on Bishop Hensley Henson. For here is one who already in the 1920's and 1930's was unflinchingly reading signs of the times which many still explain away as mere temporary phenomena incident upon another war. There are ecclesiastical leaders who seem even now to be basing their conclusions on amiable impressions gained at the last Rotary Club lunch. How good, then, that these papers should have been reprinted! They will record that, from one quarter at least, we were given the sombre truth and therefore that encouragement which only candour can provide.

Durham during the days of its palatinate jurisdiction came to be known as "The Bishoprick" *par excellence*. Hence the name of the diocesan magazine in which the essays contained in this book first appeared from time to time. Not all of them were concerned with current affairs. There are some—notably the lecture on Bishop Butler—which leave one wishing that their author had been able to engage in a large-scale work of historical writing. In Butler Bishop Henson found his hero among his predecessors. He himself has had in relation to his generation closer affinities to Tunstall.

For here, immersed in uneasy times, was a man of wide culture, whose interest in the past was always at the service of a concern for the present. The most precious bequest which he makes to us in this volume is a prophetic commentary on the lately contemporary scene. The fact that Disestablishment looms large in it and that this is not an issue of sufficient public interest to command Parliamentary time should not be allowed to detract from the present importance of his former crying in the wilderness. He himself wrote of the survival of Establishment, "per incuriam populi." But now it begins to appear that pusillanimity allowed a psychological moment to slip in 1927-28. "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance," ran the first verse of the first psalm at Matins on the morrow of the rejection of the Revised Prayer Book by the House of Commons. We examined the voting list. It seemed the

mot juste. There was firm ground for a stand. Again and again the Bishop of Durham pointed out that something of far greater moment than the Deposited Book was at stake. A Church cannot live without some measure of self-respect. Involved, then, as we are in the enfeebling aftermath of a deceitful truce we may well pay belated attention to one who perceived the true nature of the menace and met it with bolder counsels.

For the dangers to which he drew attention have not passed. A nominally established Church has not escaped the problems which he foresaw for a disestablished one. Nothing, it seems, short of catastrophe will drive the Church of England into resolutely reshaping itself for the exigencies of an uncongenial environment, but in the meantime our health is being dangerously undermined by the medicines of desperation. More especially, because we will not face financial facts, we are falling yet deeper into a pit of destruction against which Bishop Henson warned us some years ago—the appeal mentality. It remains for somebody to organize a flag day for the Church.

Readers of these papers will not be surprised that the Bishop was regarded with trust and affection by the clergy of his diocese. Section 2 of Essay 27 reveals a deep understanding of a misery—the word is not too strong—through which not a few conscientious clergymen have been passing. To sense such understanding in one's Bishop is worth a deal of wishful exhortation. Moreover, the parish clergy are here treated with a seriousness seldom accorded to them even by Christian publicists. Their opinions on social questions are quoted, and indeed they may be expected to be not altogether uninformed. At times the pastor suspects that he is in a better position than the statistician to know what is happening.

Yet, for all that, it is significant to find one whom we have known as opponent-in-chief of the division of dioceses confessing—"the relation between the Bishop and his younger clergy can never, except in very exceptional circumstances, become intimate." There are degrees of intimacy, but extensive dioceses render anything approaching intimacy impossible between bishops and large numbers of their clergy, younger and older alike. Here surely is the very breeding ground of those unformulated suspicions which are far more mischievous in the life of the Church than administrative defects or decaying party cleavages. Let it be said plainly that such suspicions exist, are increasing and will continue to increase until a reduction in the size of areas of episcopal jurisdiction enables the bishop to take into his effective counsels the general body of his fellow-clergy and not merely the official and elect. In passing it may be noted that nothing makes the parson so tenacious of his freehold as the evidences of neo-prelacy.

Not that this book betrays such evidences, nor was there about Bishop Henson's tenure of the See of Durham anything of the older prelacy which might have lived loftily apart in Auckland Castle. In his company we find ourselves more often in the mining villages. So robust was his sympathy for poorer neighbours suffering injustice that in speaking for them he was ready to risk the misunderstanding of those for whom he spoke. There is grandeur in an independence which

did not accommodate its utterances to prevailing political fashions. There are movements which in their unpopular infancy might have found a more forward supporter in him than in some of those who applaud them in their prime.

Another reviewer has remarked that *Bishoprick Papers* is likely to prove a document of importance to the historian, but we believe that it may also have a more vital future. If at one moment some commonplace of evolutionist theology tempts us to dub it "period piece" and makes the age of Archbishop Davidson seem more remote than the age of Archbishop Cranmer, at the next we are crying, "Bravo," and falling in behind a courageous and far-seeing leader whose influence will in the tough days that are coming outlast that of other more popular figures.

FRANK BENNETT.

WIGAN.

CHRISTIANITY IN CRISIS. By Eric Montizambert. Cloister Press, Louisville, Ky. $2.00.

THE SHIELD OF FAITH. By Alban Winter, C.R. S.P.C.K. 5s.

MY SCALLOP SHELL. By W. H. Elliott. Mowbrays. 5s.

Christianity in Crisis is a book from a mind in distress. The author is distressed with the fragmentary knowledge of the universe which is inculcated and indeed nurtured by the modern form of specialization in college (the scene is America) education. Theology, the Queen of the Sciences, does not get "a look in." Those who do study theology do so with little recognition of its relation to other fields of knowledge and that it is the crowning grace of all knowledge. The result is that those who are commissioned to teach and preach the Gospel are woefully unprepared for their task, and the multitudes of the semi-educated or partly educated are mentally and spiritually "sealed" by their inevitable ignorance of theology, and are in a state of mental perversity formed by the scraps of religious knowledge which have come their way. These scraps are chiefly garnered from the sceptical condemnation of religion and the Gospel in particular, spread abroad by "scientific propagandists" of the prevailing unbelief. The author shows over and over again how that the *obiter dicta* of such destructive critics, so readily accepted by multitudes of college men and women, simply do not stand up to reasonable and historical evidence and argument. Such questions as the mythological character of Christianity, the dates of its documents, the historical character and the actual teaching of the New Testament, as well as the deeper question of the existence of God, despite all the scholarship expended upon them and the general agreement of scholars concerning them, are brushed aside by the clever, deceitful quip, which is readily accepted on such trifling evidence. The author is distressed by the appalling lack of reverence for the facts and perceives how different would be the judgment of reasonable men could they but be brought to a measure of such reverence. The tragedy is that it is doubtful how far many who are caught up in this perversity will read this book. The Christian dialectic put forth by such means as college

arguments, study groups, questionnaires does not seem to be the adequate technique. The impression gained from the central part of the book, an exposition of the Christian Creed, suggests that it is too greatly concerned with counter-arguments to the vicious perversions of non-belief, which most probably in no sense satisfy men's minds, but provide temporary, and sometimes seemingly permanent, excuses, concealing the real spiritual issue. The doctrine of original sin, and a characteristic noted strongly in Holy Scripture, "eyes blinded, ears sealed," more truly account for the unintelligent drift of unbelief. The author hints quite plainly that he is aware that the proclamation of the Christian Gospel must be the work of good shepherds, a pastoral and personal work in close association with the worshipping life of the Church. The book closes with the social implications of Christianity, along the lines of certain interdenominational programs in America (including the Roman Catholics, one might say inspired by them) and the Malvern Conference. The author's high regard for such Christian leaders, expressed in his native rhetoric, sounds somewhat "idealistic" and optimistic in the face of the very effective political forces which determine our this-world chaos. The author is a priest of the Episcopal Church, and it is both helpful and revealing to read such a book from the other side of the Atlantic.

The Shield of Faith, while not a *summa theologica*, is certainly a most effective epitome of Christian doctrine, designed primarily for theological students. The main themes of Christian doctrine are set forth with simplicity, clarity and "sweet reasonableness." It has none of the vices of a short summary, for adequate space, within the limits of such a book, is given to important and debatable questions. Cardinal Newman said he rarely preached a sermon without reference to the Catechism of the Council of Trent, a handbook for pastors and preachers based on the findings of that Council. *The Shield of Faith* fulfils the same function in regard to the general Anglican standards of faith. The reviewer would both recommend it in accordance with the design of the author and also to the parochial clergy for the refreshing of their minds as to the historical, biblical and traditional understanding of the articles of the faith. There will not be complete agreement with every point of the book (in particular the dating of St Luke's gospel A.D. 90 seems unnecessarily late); but it will urge readers to desire a fuller understanding of Christian doctrine, for which there is an interesting, if somewhat limited, bibliography.

My Scallop Shell.—The Sub-Dean of the Chapels Royal is a very popular writer and broadcaster. This book well reveals that he is deservedly so. The author has a happy gift of piercing to the true needs of man. He does not write directly for the intellectual, yet his book shows a profound mind at work on religious questions. He is no sentimentalist, he knows too much of the varied and contradictory emotions of the human heart. He is above all a physician of the soul. People are frequently asking for a short book on religious problems. Frequently such books contain sustained arguments addressed to the mind or full of moral exhortation; they do little to heal the hurt of the soul's life. Mr Elliott has the physician's art, he knows what is wrong with man,

he touches the spot of the wound. No one can read this book without a sense of shame at the inadequacy of our personal response to our pilgrim state or without a chastened uplifting to pursue the path our Lord has marked out for us. The next person who has intellectual difficulties or is filled with criticism about the Church and wants a book to read will receive *My Scallop Shell*—I hope others will try it.

WANTAGE. CYRIL GARDNER.

THE SWEDISH CHURCH. By H. M. Waddams. S.P.C.K. 6s.

This book aims at providing the ordinary English reader with the necessary first information about the Church of Sweden. This it does; and many will be grateful to have the text of the eucharistic rite of 1942 (pp. 53-68). Yet it is a disappointing book; we might have hoped that one who has a first-hand knowledge of the country and of the language would have devoted more of his restricted space to telling us about modern Sweden, its culture, education, and mental outlook, and also more fully than he has done about the everyday things in the Church, its parties and movements, and its place in the national life, and less space to the past history. Perhaps he has let himself depend too much on the pioneer book which first introduced Anglican readers to the Swedish Church: Bishop John Wordsworth's Hale Lectures, *The National Church of Sweden* (Mowbrays, 1911). Of that book, good and useful as it was, a characteristic fault was this: that while the Bishop traced the history of Sweden from Viking days and earlier, he never discovered the fact of capital importance about the modern Swedish Church, that in the sixty years before he wrote the frequency of eucharistic celebration had dropped from a high to a very low level, in a manner strikingly in contrast with what was happening in England during those years. The great improvement which has taken place lately is largely associated with the Church Renewal Movement (pp. 37 *f.*). One or two more points may be noted. On page 45 it is not sufficiently clear that though the Swedish Church has "services which correspond to the English choir Offices of Mattins and Evensong," which, however, "have not the form of Offices as Anglican services have," it, like all the Lutheran Churches, lost the regular recitation of the Psalter and the continuous reading of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are the *raison d'être* of the Offices. The Church Renewal Movement is, however, reviving the Offices; in 1936 it had an order of daily services covering a week, but without propers for the seasons and for saints' days; these have since been supplied. It is also a pity that the only school of theology which is mentioned (p. 36) is that of the Lund school, which is already known here through translations. Something might have been said of the remarkable group of young biblical scholars which has been growing up at Upsala in the last ten years, under the leadership of Prof. Anton Fridrichsen. Finally, the close bond of the Swedish Church with those of Denmark, Norway, and Finland might have been mentioned; for it cannot be rightly treated in isolation from its sister-churches.

KELHAM. A. G. HEBERT, S.S.M.

THE VISION SPLENDID. By Neville Watts. Sheed and Ward. 7s. 6d.

A bookseller once told the present reviewer that books *about* poetry sell better in this country than do books *of* poetry. This can hardly be true of any other branch of literature; and, if it means anything at all, it surely means that we do not regard poetry as a wholly direct art, but as at any rate partly oblique. It is a language to be studied as well as a gift to be enjoyed. Indeed I fail to see how Mr Watts can justify his own book on any other showing—since it claims to be interpretative (how could it do otherwise?) and a key to the understanding of the poet's mind. This makes it rather astonishing that he should dismiss what is generally called "modernist" poetry without apology. He endorses A. E. Housman's judgment that "we must not call their work poetry, for all of the elements which the consent of humanity for thousands of years has decided to connote what to call poetry, this writing contains not one." This is democracy gone wild—when the readers of poetry decide what (or at least *how*) the poets shall write. He qualifies the assertion by adding that what they achieve may be something greater than poetry, but that it is not poetry—which reminds one faintly of the schoolboy who said that tennis was a game like table tennis, only played on a court out of doors. For if poetry is the rich core of our essential language—and everything positive that Mr Watts says about it implies this—then surely the greater is the richness and nearer the core, and consequently the more essentially poetry it must be; but the accusation is precisely what has been levelled at great poetry by its more respectable critics from Catullus to Auden, and apparently after.

This flaw in Mr Watts's well-informed and sometimes inspiring argument is really part of a larger problem. For there is a blind spot in his outlook—a hollow in his vision. His vein of poetry is escapist rather than realist; and he fails to realize that a vision may be a thing of agony, calling its victim to darkness and disillusion. (The visions of the New Testament from that of the Annunciation to that of Damascus were often of this kind.) To him poetry or *The Vision Splendid* is a deliverance from our darkness—the darkness of industrialism, scientific theory and social exploitation—not an agonizing realization of it in the redemptive power of words. For there are poets who, while acknowledging with their heart's blood the weakness of words, yet know that they must bear their burden in the redemptive purpose of art. Indeed, I would suggest that Mr Watts and Housman and all who think like them in this matter (even when they are themselves poets of significance), by missing the redemptive possibilities in art, become unrealist as critics and end by treating poetry as a drug or a dream. This is the antithesis of the "modernist" poet's outlook—even when he is a pagan; which Christian poets in all ages have consciously or unconsciously rejected. Hence, I suspect, the influence of Donne on the present generation.

It is, however, impossible not to enjoy this book. There is more sugar in it than salt, more milk than meat, and in its fierce determination not to be highbrow it falls into the one really dangerous snare of the highbrow and waxes pretentious. What, for instance, is meant by "it is a better thing to live poetry than to read it; and herein lies the true

democracy of poetry, that there is in it equality of opportunity for all"? I suggest that there is more loose thinking and preciosity—to say nothing of obscurity—in that odd little sentence than in whole cantos of typical modernist poetry.

ASHLEY SAMPSON.

LONDON.

SHORTER NOTICES

A First Introduction to the New Testament. By W. C. Somerville. Longmans. 2s. 6d.

This elementary introduction to the New Testament, written by a Presbyterian missionary in India who is also a lecturer in chemistry, is designed not only for those who, though nominally Christian, have no first-hand knowledge of the Book, but also for adherents of other faiths, or even of none, who may be interested. It is simply written, orderly in arrangement, and, where it sticks to facts as an introduction should, it presents them fairly and accurately. In particular, its description of the background against which the New Testament was written, and the summaries of each several book in it, are admirable for its limited purpose. It is when the author deliberately goes outside the usual confines of an introduction that one's doubts arise. His laudable intention is to suggest possible answers to questions which, if they were to remain unanswered, might discourage investigation on the part of a newcomer before it had properly begun. But one wonders whether the writer is not too sympathetic to the outlook of his potential readers—*e.g.*, in regard to miracles or "evolution"—to be able to deliver them from the mental bondage with which the average modern is bewitched. There is little appreciation of the Church, its nature and authority, which more recent biblical studies have laid bare, and for this writer there is no problem of its visible unity at all.

G. E. P. Cox.

HAIGH.

Let us Pray. By Roland F. Palmer, S.S.J.E. S.P.C.K. 1s. 6d.

This little book is distinguished from many Manuals usually delivered to Confirmation candidates in that most of its many aids to devotion reproduce, in remarkable degree, the language of the Bible and the Prayer Book. This is important, if, as more than one New Testament scholar suggests, we substitute non-biblical language for "the language of the Church" always at a risk. There is also much wise and pithy instruction on matters of Faith and Duty, and their correlatives in a sinful world, Repentance and Confession. We wish this book well.

G. E. P. Cox.

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